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ABSTRACT

This checklist and accompanying video are designed to help family child care providers assess the health and safety of the child care home. The checklist includes suggestions for conducting the self-evaluation and for creating a safer, healthier home environment. The areas of the checklist are: your home, out of bounds areas, gates and guards, storage, infant/toddler equipment, outdoor play, emergency planning, and health and hygiene. Additional notes explain the health or safety danger identified in each item on the checklist and offer suggestions for making changes to increase health and safety. A form for developing a plan of action is included as well as a list of community agencies for additional information and assistance. Completing the manual are resource pages on safety routines and drills such as location of space heaters, fire escape plans, poisonous and safe plants, choking prevention, handwashing, and diaper changing. The accompanying 20-minute videotape, for use in conjunction with the checklist, was filmed in a family child care home and presents some of the possible safety hazards that may exist in typical family child care settings. The sections of the videotape parallel those of the checklist. (KB)

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# Family Child Care Health and Safety Checklist

A packet for family child care providers

Abby Shapiro Kendrick
and Joanne Gravell
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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Redleaf Press
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## A word about this checklist

In this publication we have tried to point out some of the ways to make a family child care home safer. Every home is different, however. We cannot cover all possible ways in which to make a home safer, nor can we always know what will work best in your situation. Look around your home, and expand upon or modify this checklist according to your individual needs.

States, cities and counties have various and differing regulations. Check with all necessary agencies to make certain that you comply with health and safety regulations.

# Getting started

Welcome to **Family Child Care Health And Safety!** We appreciate your interest in making your home safer and healthier for the children in your care. If you have not seen the health and safety video created to accompany this booklet, see if you can borrow it from a child care resource and referral agency in your community.

This booklet lets you work at a time and pace that is convenient to you. It contains a checklist, a notes section that further explains checklist items, and some quick-reference resource pages to help you with specific health and safety practices. It also contains a list of health and safety resource agencies you may find in your area, and mail order companies you can use to buy specific safety supplies. This introduction will tell you:

**How to use this packet; and**

**How to improve your family child care health and safety.**

# How to use this packet

1 **When to Begin** — The best time to conduct your first check is before you start doing child care. Plan a day when you can have at least twenty minutes of uninterrupted time.

2 **How to Begin** — Decide which area of your home you need to check first. You might want to start in the bathroom and the kitchen since most injuries happen in those rooms. Or you might want to start with a playroom where the children will spend most of their time. Watch the videotape and then go over one section of the checklist. You can do sections in any order. Circle the appropriate answer. A "No" answer means that a change is recommended. See the Checklist Notes section on that question for more information.

3 **Making Changes** — If you can change something right away, do it! After completing the checklist, you may have many "No"s circled. Don't be discouraged. You just need to decide what changes to make first. Look at the Checklist Notes. Then, fill out the Plan Of Action on page 34. Order the items to be changed and set your goals. You may want to pick the most dangerous problems and correct them first. Or start with a few items that can be changed quickly and easily to get a feeling of accomplishment. Make a list of supplies you need to get and resource agencies you need to contact.

4 **Setting a Date for Your Next Check** — Check your home every three months or whenever you enroll a new child, whichever comes first. Each time, you will see progress. You can also check your "Yes" answers to make sure these areas are still safe and healthy. Finally, set new goals. As you become used to the checklist, you can add items specific to your home.

# How to improve your family child care home

1 You can create a safer, healthier home by:

**Providing appropriate supervision** — There is no substitute for supervising children closely and carefully. For example, even the best safety latch is not foolproof; it just gives you a few extra moments to reach that child who is trying to get into your cleaning supplies.

**Using safety supplies and technology** — Items such as outlet plugs and cabinet latches prevent or slow children from getting into dangerous areas. Install a smoke detector or lower the thermostat temperature on the hot water heater. These changes last a long time.

**Developing good behavior and habits** — This is repeated behavior such as following good handwashing routines, picking up small objects left within children's reach, and always keeping your hot coffee cup away from children. Remember, children learn best by imitating others. Your good habits will protect the children's health and safety and your example will teach the children habits for a lifetime.

**Following laws and regulations** — These can cover any of the other areas and give us an extra push by requiring the correct action. Examples are laws mandating that young children use car safety seats and family child care regulations that require providers to have a regular fire drill practice. (Health and safety requirements for family day care homes vary from state to state. The requirements in this checklist may differ from or exceed your state's requirements. You will want to make your home as safe as you can, even if it goes beyond what your state requires.)

2 When you are checking your home, think about children's *developmental stages*. Children's health and safety are tied to their physical and mental abilities. For example, most children under four years old cannot remember rules for more than a few minutes. So, removing dangerous objects from reach is more effective than reminding them not to touch. Children under three learn by mouthing objects, so poisoning and choking are big problems in this age group. Knowing these stages and the dangers at each step helps you to be prepared.

3 If you buy *used children's equipment* such as a crib, playpen, car seat, or toys for your child care program, check it carefully. Make sure each item is in good repair, with no missing pieces or sharp edges. If you buy a car seat, make sure it has never been in a car crash. Always try to get the original instruction booklet from the owner or manufacturer. Learn to use the equipment correctly. Check with the Federal Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772 about any federal guidelines that the equipment should meet.

4 Checks should be done *on a regular basis*. There are many reasons for this. With practice, you become better at spotting dangers. Some items, such as the batteries in a smoke detector or the supplies in a first aid kit, need to be checked regularly. Also, new children enter your care and all children grow and develop. You have to prepare for new situations, such as a five year old's curiosity about matches or a baby who is just learning to crawl. Finally, repeating the check will remind you of how many changes you have already made, and what still needs to be done.

5 A *different pair of eyes* can be helpful. Ask parents, friends, or other providers to help you go through the checklist. They may see hazards you haven't noticed or offer solutions you haven't considered.

Date: _____

# Your home

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have you checked **your home's structure and furniture** to see if they are safe, clean, sturdy and in good repair? For example: | | |
| | Furniture | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Stairs (outdoor, indoor, fire escape) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Porches, decks, balconies | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Railings (on stairs, porches, decks, lofts) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Floors, rugs | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Have you **placed furniture** so children *cannot* climb to reach windows or hazardous objects? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 3 | Have you checked to see if **electrical cords** are safe, in good condition and **placed away from children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 4 | Have you placed **electrical cords** so they do not run under the rugs? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 5 | Are you sure that there is no **lead paint** in your home? | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes page 14.

Date: _____

# Out of bounds

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have you identified all household plants and **removed any poisonous plants from children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Do you always **empty standing water** from pails after use and keep the bathroom door closed? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 3 | Have you removed **all uncovered space heaters** from your day care area? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 4 | Is your **fireplace screened?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 5 | If you have a **woodstove,** is it: | | |
| | Installed to meet local safety standards? | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Out of children's reach or barricaded? | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Used only with safe fuel? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 6 | Have you **barricaded radiators, hot water pipes** or other heating devices so children cannot touch them? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 7 | Do you keep all **matches and lighters out of children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 8 | Do you have **safety outlet covers or plugs** in every electrical outlet in rooms used by children? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 9 | Have you **eliminated all tobacco use** in areas **where children are in care?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 10 | Have you fixed **garage and basement doors** so they **cannot be opened** by young children? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 11 | Have you made sure that any **inside doors to rooms and closets that lock can be unlocked** from both sides? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 12 | Are **windows screened** and, if less than 4 feet from the floor, do you **open them from the top** or have a **barricade** installed? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 13 | Have you **covered trash** and placed it out of children's reach? | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes pages 15 – 18.

Date: _____

# Gates and Guards

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have you **installed child safety gates** to block access to stairs and other dangerous areas? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Have you **removed** and replaced **dangerous, old-fashioned accordion gates?** | **Yes** | **No** |

# Storage

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have you **installed childproof latches** on all drawers and cabinets containing dangerous items? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Have you **stored all poisonous items out of children's reach?** For example: | | |
| | Medicines, vitamins | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Cosmetics (shampoo, perfume, mouthwash, etc.) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Cleaning supplies (bleach, polish, ammonia, etc.) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Alcoholic beverages | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Pet supplies | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Home repair supplies (turpentine, paint, solvents, etc.) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Cigarettes and cigarette butts | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Gasoline | **Yes** | **No** |
| 3 | Do you **keep all poisons in their original containers?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 4 | Do you **store all poisons,** including medicines and pet supplies, **away from food** products? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 5 | Do you **keep all purses (yours and visitors') out of children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes pages 18 – 20.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **6** | Do you **keep all hot items out of children's reach?** For example: | | |
| | Pots on stove | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Crockpot, electric fry pan, coffeemaker | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Hot cups of coffee, tea | **Yes** | **No** |
| **7** | Is your **tap hot water temperature** 120° F or less? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **8** | Do you **keep all sharp objects out of children's reach?** For example: | | |
| | Cooking knives, steak knives | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Silverware, cooking utensils | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Scissors, tools | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Plastic wraps, wax paper, aluminum foil or other packages with sharp edges | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Glass bottles, jars, or drinking glasses | **Yes** | **No** |
| **9** | Have you **placed all chokeable items out of children's reach** including: | | |
| | Small household items (keys, coins, paperclips, etc.) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Small batteries | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Small toys or toys with small pieces | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Trash bags or plastic bags (suffocation hazard) | **Yes** | **No** |
| **10** | Have you **put all balloons (latex, not foil) out of children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| **11** | Do you always **cut up food into small pieces** for children under 3 years old? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **12** | If you use a **toy chest,** have you **removed the lid** or installed **airholes and a special slow-closing latch?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| **13** | In the bathroom, have you **removed** all **objects that cause electrical shock out of children's reach** such as: | | |
| | Hair dryer, electric curler, curling iron | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Electric razor, radio, TV | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes pages 20 – 22.

Date: _____

# Infant/Toddler Equipment

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Do **infants and toddlers always sleep in a crib** or playpen and not on an adult bed, waterbed, thick rug or beanbag? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Are **crib rails spaced 2 3/8 inches** or less apart? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 3 | Is the **crib mattress tightfitting** (i.e. no more than two fingers width can fit in gap)? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 4 | Do you always keep **playpen and crib sides up?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 5 | For **mesh-sided playpens,** are mesh holes less **than 1/4 inch?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 6 | Is infant/toddler **furniture placed away from dangling objects** such as shade pulls and curtain cords? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 7 | If the infant is able to pull himself/herself up, have you **removed all hanging crib toys?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 8 | Have you **removed all dangerous items from the crib** including pillows, plastic wrap on mattress, toys with small parts (for example, stuffed animal with button eyes)? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 9 | Do you **avoid the use of walkers,** especially if there are any stairs in your home? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 10 | Do you **avoid the use of homemade pacifiers,** pacifier cords, and necklaces around children's necks? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 11 | Do you **avoid using the microwave to heat bottles or baby food?** | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes pages 22 – 24.

Date: _____

# Outdoor Play

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Is the **child play area clear of hazards** such as machines, tools, trash, tree roots, etc.? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Is the **play area fenced** if it is near a dangerous area such as a busy street, lake, river, pond, well, railroad tracks, or trash dump? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 3 | Is **play equipment placed at least 6 feet away** from vehicles, buildings, fences, walkways, trees, large rocks, and other play equipment? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 4 | Do you **cover the sandbox** or sand play area when it is not in use? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 5 | Do you **use a sprinkler or hose for water play** instead of a wading pool? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 6 | Do you **empty standing water from containers** such as wading pools, pails, and ice chests when they are not in use? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 7 | Does your **play area have an impact-absorbing surface** such as 1 foot deep sand or woodchips, or a commercial surface under and at least 6 feet beyond the edge of climbers, slides, swings, etc.? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 8 | Are all **protruding bolts or screws on play equipment covered** with plastic safety caps? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 9 | If **swings** use S hooks, are the **S hooks completely closed?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 10 | If **swings** are hung by chains, are the **chainlink openings less than 5/8 inches** *or* are the chains covered with plastic tubing for at least the lower 4 feet? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 11 | Are **storage areas such as garages, barns, or sheds locked** or barricaded so children can't get to dangerous materials? | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes pages 25 – 27.

Date: _____

12 If you have an **in-ground or above-ground swimming pool,** have you followed **strict safety precautions?** For example, do you:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Meet all local pool regulations | **Yes** | **No** |
| Have training in CPR for infants and children | **Yes** | **No** |
| Have put up 5 foot fence with self-closing and latching gate (or locking ladder for 4 foot or higher above-ground pool) | **Yes** | **No** |
| Closely supervise children within arm's reach when using pool (never leave to answer the phone, doorbell or get something from the house) | **Yes** | **No** |

# Emergency Planning

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Do you have **local community emergency numbers posted by your phone** including police, fire, ambulance, hospital, or emergency room, and poison control center? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 2 | Do you have **your own phone number, address and directions to your home posted** by the phone? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 3 | Do you have **two people for emergency backup care** who live within 10 minutes of you? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 4 | Do you have **children's emergency numbers available** on cards you can take on field trips? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 5 | Do you have a **written emergency evacuation plan that you practice monthly** with the children? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 6 | Do you have **a first aid kit** with the items listed on the resource page in the back of this booklet? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 7 | Are your **first aid supplies stored in a portable kit which is kept out of children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| 8 | Do you have a **pressurized fire extinguisher** with instructions in the kitchen, placed away from the stove and near an exit? | **Yes** | **No** |
| 9 | Do you have at least one **working smoke detector** located on each level of your home? | **Yes** | **No** |



**See Checklist Notes pages 27 – 30.**

Date: _____

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **10** | Do you have a **working flashlight** within easy reach for you but away from children? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **11** | Are **children always located on the same floor of the house as you,** even during naptime? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **12** | Are there **two clear exits to the outside** on each level of your home used for child care? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **13** | Are you **certified in first aid** for children? | **Yes** | **No** |

# Health and Hygiene

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Do you **wash hands** at the following times? | | |
| | Provider | | |
| | Before children arrive for the day | **Yes** | **No** |
| | After cleaning | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Children | | |
| | Upon arrival | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Both Provider and Children | | |
| | Before preparing or eating food | **Yes** | **No** |
| | After diapering/toileting | **Yes** | **No** |
| | After contact with body fluids (blood, mucus, vomit, feces, urine, etc.) | **Yes** | **No** |
| | After coming in from outside play | **Yes** | **No** |
| | After touching animals or their equipment | **Yes** | **No** |
| **2** | Do you always **wash with soap and running water and use individual towels** for drying? (Liquid soap and paper towels recommended.) | **Yes** | **No** |



See Checklist Notes pages 30 – 31.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | Do you **clean and sanitize toys and surfaces** with soap and water and then spray them with a bleach solution or other sanitizer — | | |
| | After every use: high chair trays, table tops, potty chairs, diapering surface | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Regularly: toys | **Yes** | **No** |
| **4** | Do you **throw away contaminated trash** such as diapers, tissues, and bandaids, in a covered, lined container? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **5** | Do you **store contaminated, reusable items** such as cloth diapers or soiled clothes in a leakproof bag **out of children's reach** and send them home instead of laundering the items yourself? | **Yes** | **No** |
| **6** | Do you follow these steps for safety and to reduce the spread of germs from **diapering**: | | |
| | Diapering surface is separate from the kitchen | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Use a new, disposable cover on the surface for each change | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Use your hand to restrain child at all times | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Wipe from front to back, use each wipe once | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Clean and sanitize the diapering surface after each change | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Wash your own and child's hands each time | **Yes** | **No** |
| **7** | Do you keep **cat litter boxes out of children's reach?** | **Yes** | **No** |
| **8** | Do you **keep up-to-date records** for each child. For example: | | |
| | Medical history and immunization record | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Parent's written permission to transport child in case of a medical emergency | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Parent's written permission to give medication | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Record of every date, time, and dosage of medication given | **Yes** | **No** |
| | Record form for injury seen at arrival or occurring during the day | **Yes** | **No** |
| **9** | Do you know what **agency to contact if you suspect child abuse** or neglect? | **Yes** | **No** |

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**See Checklist Notes pages 32 – 33.**

# Congratulations!

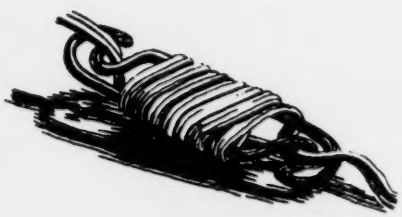
You have now finished the Checklist. Please look at the Checklist Notes that follow for any items where you have circled "No," or to learn more about making your day care home safer and healthier. Correct problems right away if possible. Then fill in the enclosed Plan of Action on page 34 to put the rest of the required changes in priority order.

# Your home

1 **Your home's structure and furniture**
**Problem:** Falls, cuts
**Check** for splinters, loose joints, rotten wood, protruding metal. All structures should be sturdy so that children will not fall over, on or through them. Measure the spacing between railings to prevent young children from strangling or falling through; it should be 4 inches or less. Any roof, balcony or porch over 30 inches above the ground and used during child care should be enclosed by a 3 foot wall or protective railing. Make sure rugs are tacked down.
**Solution:** Carpentry repairs, removal of clutter, safety mesh on widely spaced railings. (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.)

2 **Furniture placement**
**Problem:** Falls, cuts, choking
**Check** that furniture is not placed near shelves with sharp, chokeable or breakable objects or near dangling cords from curtains or shades.
**Solution:** Move furniture, dangerous items.

3 **Electrical cords away from children's reach**
**Problem:** Electrical shock, fire, injury from heavy objects
**Check** for cords that are frayed or cut or located where children could pull over heavy objects on themselves (for example lamps, irons).
**Solution:** Replace damaged cords. Use cord shorteners or electrical plug covers. (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.) Move electrical objects close to electrical outlets. Extension cords should be used for temporary purposes only (e.g. a cassette tape player, vacuum cleaner, etc...). Unplug appliances when not in use. Purchase extension cords that have built-in safety plugs.



**Cord Shortener**

4 **Electrical cords do not run under rugs**
**Problem:** Electrical shock, fire
**Check** for any cord under a rug, or across a doorway.
Check to see if outlets are being overloaded.
**Solution:** Remove any cords under rugs or across doorways. Move electrical appliances closer to outlets.

5 **Lead paint**
**Problem:** Lead poisoning
**Check** paint in your home and outdoor soil for lead content. If your house was built prior to the 1970s, lead paint was probably used on the inside or outside walls. Peeling or chipping paint may have put lead in the dust around the house. Contact your local Board of Health about testing paint samples. Contact your County Extension Service about soil testing — mention lead specifically. Encourage parents to have their children tested according to your state's screening schedule.

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**Solution:** Arrange for removal or cover up of lead paint or soil. This is **not** a do-it-yourself job. Incorrect removal may release more lead into the environment. Consult your local Health Department. Lead poisoning cannot be prevented through supervision since a common source of lead is dust. Wash your hands and the children's hands frequently, especially before eating and when coming in from outdoor play to avoid lead exposure. Regular cleaning, including vacuuming, wet-dusting, and wet-mopping, can remove lead dust.

# Out of bounds

1 **Poisonous plants**
**Problem:** Poisoning, skin rashes
**Check** with local gardening center or in plant identification book to find the names of your house and yard plants. Check to see if any are poisonous. Label all house plants; make a list of yard plants.
**Solution:** Get rid of poisonous plants or place them out of children's reach. Fence off outdoor plants that you don't remove.

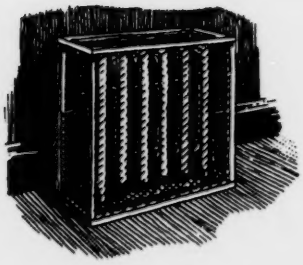
2 **Empty standing water**
**Problem:** Drowning, diseases passed through water.
**Check** your home to see where children have access to **water.**
**Solution:** Keep the bathroom door shut. Be careful to always empty pails of standing water — even when you stop cleaning to prepare a meal or to answer the phone. Dump out standing water that collects outside after rain in barrels and wading pools.

3 **Remove all inadequate space heaters**
**Problem:** Burns, fires, dangerous fumes
**Check** local laws or regulations concerning space heaters — they may be against child care regulations or state law. Liquid fuel space heaters (i.e. kerosene) should never be used anywhere in the home.
**Solution:** Remove all space heaters from your child care area. Do not use illegal space heaters anywhere in your home.

4 **Fireplace screened**
**Problem:** Burns, fires
**Check** to make sure children cannot get into the fireplace area. Check that ashes from the fireplace are blocked with a screen.
**Solution:** Keep a screen in front of the fireplace during seasons of regular use. Do not burn fires during child care hours.

**Woodstove Barricade**

**5** Woodstove safety
**Problem:** Burns, fires, toxic fumes, falls
**Check** local regulations for wood stoves. Your stove should be properly placed, maintained in safe condition, and out of children's reach. Make sure your stove is airtight and has no cracks or gaps in the seams. Have the fire department check to see that it has been hooked up correctly. Burn only seasoned wood. Never burn painted or pressure treated wood. Have your chimney cleaned at least once a year to prevent creosote buildup. Check the placement of the stove to see if a barricade is needed.
**Solution:** Use only a safe stove, properly installed and maintained. The stove should be placed on a fireproof platform and at least 3 feet from walls or furniture. Place the stove out of the child care area or install a barrier at least 36 inches from the stove that keeps children from falling against it. (See the resource page on woodstove safety at the end of the booklet.)



**Radiator Barricade**

**6** Barricaded radiators and hot water pipes
**Problem:** Burns
**Check** for the placement of all radiators, hot water pipes and any other heating devices.
**Solution:** Placement of furniture may be able to block access to pipes. You or a friend can build radiator barricades. (See the resource page on radiator barricades at the end of the booklet.) Wrap hot water pipes with an insulating cover.

**7** Matches and lighters out of children's reach
**Problem:** Burns, fires
**Check** the location of all matches and lighters. Don't forget to check for those used for lighting barbecue or birthday candles or for those kept in pocketbooks or coat pockets.
**Solution:** Keep all matches and lighters out of children's reach. Teach children to always bring matches and lighters to an adult. Teach older children to **Stop, Drop** and **Roll**. (See the resource page on this subject at the end of the booklet.)

**8** Electrical safety outlet covers and plugs
**Problem:** Electrical shock
**Check** every outlet in the child care area frequently.
**Solution:** Purchase and install safety outlet plugs and covers. Plugs can be used in outlets that are infrequently used. Make sure that outlet plugs are not chokeable items. (See item #9, page 21.) For often used outlets, such as those in the bathroom and kitchen, spring-loaded covers may be more convenient. Finally, for outlets that have cords that remain plugged in (such as the TV or stereo), box-type outlet covers are available to prevent children from pulling plugs out. (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.) Ask other family members to replace plugs anytime they remove them.

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9 **Tobacco products cannot be used in areas where children are in care.**
**Problem:** Burns, nicotine poisoning, secondhand smoke, unhealthy role modeling
**Check** to be certain no one in your home uses tobacco products during care hours.
**Solution:** Do not allow use of tobacco products while children are in care. Most states have adopted a policy similar to this one. If you smoke, try to quit for your own health and the health of the children. Contact agencies noted on the resource list on page 35 for help in quitting completely.

10 **Garage and basement doors cannot be opened**
**Problem:** Falls, access to poisons, sharp tools
**Check** to see if doors in the child care area lead to garage, basement, attic or deck. Check to see if any door is used as an emergency exit from the child care area.
**Solution:** If door is *not* an emergency exit, install a hook and eye or other lock above children's reach. If door leads to an emergency exit, use a door knob guard to prevent young children from opening the door but teach older children (age 4 and over) how to get out in an emergency. A child gate or an alarm at the top of stairs leading to your basement or garage is an extra safety step. For sliding glass doors, keep curtains shut or tape stickers to the doors so children know when they are open or closed. (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.)

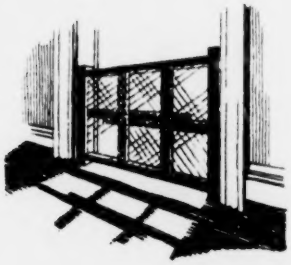
11 **Inside doors to rooms and closets that lock can be unlocked**
**Problem:** Entrapment, access to hazards
**Check** for locks on closet, bathroom, attic or garage doors to see if children could lock themselves in.
**Solution:** Remove or tape-over the lock. Keep a spare key for any door that locks or place a towel over the door top above children's reach to prevent the door from closing completely.

**Window Guard**

12 **Windows screened and open from the top**
**Problem:** Falls, insects
**Check** that screens are secure and without holes. Check to see if windows can be opened from the top or that window guards or locks are installed.
**Solution:** Any window that is opened should be screened to prevent insects from coming in. Screens are *not* strong enough to prevent falls from windows. Windows should be opened from the top for ventilation. For windows that can only be opened from the bottom, install a commercial window guard to prevent children from falling out. Or install a security window lock so that the window can be locked in place. Raise the window no more than 6 inches.

**13** Covered trash
**Problem:** Cuts from glass and cans, health hazard (garbage, insects)
**Check** the type of trash container and where it is placed.
**Solution:** Buy covered trash container and use it with a plastic liner. If trash is within children's reach, remove trash often to a covered trash can out doors.

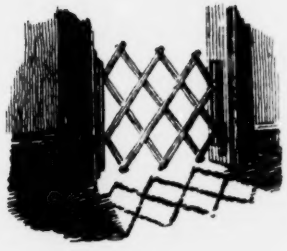
# Gates and Guards



**Example of safe gate**

**1** Installed child safety gates
**Problem:** Falls, especially for children under 3 years old
**Check** all stairways that children can get to in the child care area.
**Solution:** Place gates at the bottom of stairs to prevent a toddler from climbing up and falling back down. Place gates at the top of stairs to stop children from falling downstairs. Gates should be firmly attached and of an approved type. (See next item.)

**2** Dangerous, old-fashioned accordion gates
**Problem:** Strangulation
**Check** the type of gate in use. It should *not* be an old-fashioned, diamond-shaped accordion gate. (See illustration.)
**Solution:** Replace any dangerous gate with an approved gate. Destroy the old gate.



**Old-fasioned accordian gate; do not use this type**

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# Storage

1 **Installed childproof latches**
**Problem:** Poisoning, cuts, choking, suffocation
**Check** all drawers and cabinets that are within 4 feet of the floor or in easy reach of children. Check for dangerous items including pressurized spray cans; cleaning supplies; polishes; matches; insecticides; firearms; tools; sharp-pointed or sharp-edged items; plastic bags; medical supplies and prescription or over-the-counter drugs.
**Solution:** Move all dangerous items to a cabinet or closet 4 feet above the floor, out of children's reach and out of their sight. Install cabinet and drawer latches every place where dangerous items are stored. Children learn to open latches when they are about 3 or 4 years old and some younger children may be able to as well. Latches should be used in addition to — and not instead of — careful supervision. Keep any firearms locked away separately from ammunition, which should also be locked away.

2 **Poisonous items out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Poisoning — the leading cause of injury and deaths for children from 1 to 3 years.
**Check** to see where all these items are kept. Medicines are still the cause of many serious poisonings. Some of these occur when family members, grandparents or other visitors leave medicines in children's reach (for example, in a handbag) or have removed the childproof caps from medicine bottles.
**Other poison concerns:** Never call medicine candy; it may confuse children into trying medicines that can poison them. An overdose of vitamins, especially those with iron or flouride, are another cause of poisoning. Cosmetics are often eaten by children trying to imitate adults. Cleaning supplies can cause poisonings and serious chemical burns. Alcoholic beverages can cause severe alcohol poisoning. Dangerous pet supplies include aquarium chemicals and flea powders. Home repair products include many serious poisons. Cigarettes can cause nicotine poisoning.
**Solution:** Store poisons above children's reach, out of sight and in latched cabinets. Try to reduce the number of cleaning products you use and substitute nontoxic products for poisonous ones. Check all children's art supplies to make sure they are nontoxic.

3 **Poisons stored in their original containers**
**Problem:** Poisoning
**Check** to see that all poisons are in their original containers. Poisons should never be placed in food containers. Children may mistake poison for food if it is in a look-alike container that they recognize, like a milk or yogurt container. Original containers often have important ingredient information on them. However, in case of poisoning, call the Poison Control Center for instructions. Do not follow directions on the package — these can be wrong.
**Solution:** Remove all poisons that are not in their original containers.

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**4 Store all poisons away from food**
**Problem:** Poisoning
**Check** to make sure that no poisons are stored near food. Colorful packages can attract children's attention. Children — or adults — might mistake a poison for a food product if the packages look alike.
**Solution:** Separate out all poisons including medicines and pet supplies and keep them away from food.

**5 Purses out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Poisoning, cuts, choking
**Check** to make sure that your own handbag and those of visitors are kept out of children's reach. Purses often contain items dangerous to children, such as medicines, cosmetics, bobby pins and other chokeables, as well as sharp items like scissors or files.
**Solution:** Have a special place, such as a high closet shelf, out of children's reach, for your own and visitors' purses.

**Stoveguard**

**6 Hot items out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Burns
**Check** to see where hot items are placed.
**Solution:** Use back burners on stove for cooking. Purchase a stoveguard. (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.) Keep pot handles turned in towards the center of the stove. Never drink hot beverages, such as coffee or tea, while holding a child in your lap. Do not use tablecloths or placemats that children can pull off. Keep all hot appliances away from children. If you use a water dispenser with a hot water spigot, disconnect it.

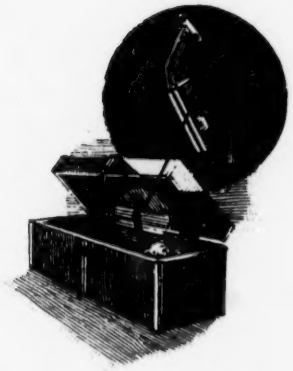
**7 Tap hot water temperature**
**Problem:** Scald burns
**Check** the temperature of your hot tap water using a meat thermometer or a hot water gauge. (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.) Check local regulations for hot water temperature limits.
**Solution:** Lower hot water temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. At 120° F, it takes 10 minutes for a third degree burn to occur but at 130° F, the time is 30 seconds. If the hot water temperature is regulated by a single unit hot water heater, you can turn the setting to "low" or "warm" and retest the water temperature. If the water temperature is regulated through the furnace, you may have to have the water temperature adjusted by a heating specialist or plumber. If you live in a rental unit, you may have to request that the landlord adjust the temperature. If there is only one sink used by the children, check underneath the sink to see if you can turn off the hot water valve, at least during child care hours. You may want to purchase hot water boosters to increase the hot water temperature of the dishwasher, clothes washer or other appliance, once you have turned the temperature down.

**8 Sharp objects out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Cuts
**Check** for the location of all items in the checklist plus food processor blades, vegetable peelers, and can openers.
**Solution:** Keep sharp objects out of children's reach. Always return knives and sharp utensils to latched drawers. Don't forget that packages with serrated edges, such as wax paper boxes, can cause deep cuts.

**9 Chokeable items out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Choking, suffocation, particularly for children under 3 years old
**Check** for any small objects in the child care area, using a choke test tube (See Mail Order Companies, page 36.) Check the age labeling on toys — don't give toys with small parts to young children. Check toys regularly for loose or broken parts.
**Solution:** Remove all small items from young children's reach. Repair or throw away broken toys. Plan ways to supervise older children when they use toys with small parts. For example, older children can play games with small parts at the kitchen table away from younger children or during the baby's nap time.

**10 Balloons kept out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Choking, suffocation
**Check** location of any balloons in the child care area
**Solution:** Remove all latex balloons from the child care area. Closely supervise children anytime balloons are around. Children are attracted to the bright colors and will put pieces of broken or deflated balloons in their mouths and may choke. This danger occurs with latex (rubber) balloons — those made of Mylar (foil-type) do not seem to be dangerous.

**11 Food cut up in small pieces**
**Problem:** Choking, especially for children under 3 years old
**Check** the kinds of food you serve to young children and how you serve them.
**Solution:** Do not serve young children foods that are hard to chew such as nuts, popcorn, raw carrots, taco shells, or hard candy. Other foods, such as apples and grapes, should be cut into small pieces. Hot dogs are still the leading cause of food choking and should always be cut the long way (even when in a bun) — never into small round slices.



**Toy chest with slow-closing safety hinge**

**12 Toy chest has airholes and a slow-closing latch**
**Problem:** Head or neck injury, suffocation
**Check** the toy chest to see if it has a heavy lid or needs a slow-closing safety hinge.
**Solution:** Remove the toy chest lid or put in a strong slow-closing safety hinge. If the toy chest has a latch, remove it. If you are using a toy chest with a lid, make sure it has airholes or drill some holes yourself. A better choice is to replace the toy chest with open shelves so children can select

their toys and help clean up. Make sure the shelves are lightweight or attached to the wall so children can't get hurt from shelves falling on them.

**13 Objects that cause electrical shock are out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Electrical shock
**Check** to see if any electrical appliances are kept in the bathroom or near the kitchen sink.
**Solution:** Keep electrical appliances away from water and either unplugged or beyond children's reach. Even if appliances are shut off, they can cause electrical shock. A Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) can prevent electrical shock by shutting off the current if the appliance comes into contact with water. Newer homes may have these already or they can be installed in older homes.

# Infant/Toddler Equipment

**1 Infants and toddlers always sleep in a crib**
**Problem:** Falls, suffocation
**Check** to make sure you have a crib, portacrib, or playpen that meets safety standards for every child under 2 years old.
**Solution:** Never put an infant to nap on a waterbed, beanbag, or thick rug. Babies may not be strong enough to lift or move their heads and can suffocate to death. Young children can be seriously injured in falls from adult beds or can get wedged between the bed and the wall. Always put children to sleep in an age-appropriate bed. Children should sleep in a crib until their height is 35 inches, usually around 18 months.

**2 Crib rails spaced 2 3/8 inches or less apart**
**Problem:** Strangulation
**Check** with a ruler to measure the distance between the crib slats. It should be no more than 2 3/8 inches.
**Solution:** If the slat distance is too wide, the *only* truly safe action is to throw out the crib and replace it with a new one. Until you do, you can use crib bumper pads to help prevent babies from squirming between the slats. They usually wiggle through feet first.

**3 Crib mattress is tightfitting**
**Problem:** Suffocation
**Check** to see how snugly the mattress fits in the crib. You should not be able to fit more than 2 fingers' width between the mattress edge and the crib sides.
**Solution:** If the mattress is too small for the crib, the *only* truly safe action is to buy a new mattress. Until you do, you can stuff rolled towels around the edge to fill in the gap between the mattress and the sides. Also, crib bumper pads can help to fill in this gap.

**Other crib safety concerns:** While checking the crib, look at the corner posts of the crib and any decorative cutouts in the headboard or footboard. Babies have been strangled when clothes or a pacifier tied around their neck got caught on a corner post. Babies have gotten their heads stuck in crib cutouts. You should unscrew or saw off any corner posts. You can cover cutouts with a board. Also be sure to check all the hardware on the crib — nuts, bolts, and screws — to make sure there are no missing parts and every thing is tight.

**4 Playpen and crib sides are up**
**Problem:** Falls, suffocation
**Check** to make sure that crib and playpen sides are always up when the child is inside.
**Solution:** Always keep crib sides up to prevent children from falling or climbing out. Also move the mattress to a lower position as children grow to prevent falls. Babies have suffocated in mesh playpens, when they got caught between the bottom of the playpen and the loose mesh net when the side was down. Be sure to keep the sides raised and locked into position.

**5 Mesh-sided playpens have mesh holes less than 1/4 inch**
**Problem:** Strangulation
**Check** for holes or rips in the mesh. Measure the holes to make sure they are no wider than 1/4 inch. Children have gotten buttons and clothing stuck in these holes.
**Solution:** If the playpen is unsafe, replace it. In any case, do not leave children in a playpen for a long time. This can interfere with their healthy development.

**6 Furniture is placed away from dangling cords**
**Problem:** Strangulation
**Check** to see if a child could reach curtain or shade cords from the crib or playpen.
**Solution:** Move the crib or playpen away from any dangling cords. Wrap the cords up on a cord shortener (see Mail Order Companies, page 36), or keep them up out of reach of children.

**7 All hanging crib toys removed**
**Problem:** Strangulation
**Check** the crib for any hanging musical toy or crib "gym".
**Solution:** Before babies are able to pull themselves up, remove any hanging crib toys to prevent them from hanging themselves or becoming entangled on the toy.

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**8 All dangerous items removed from crib**
**Problem:** Suffocation, choking, falls
**Check** the crib for any dangerous items such as a plastic mattress cover, pillows, and toys with small chokeable parts such as button eyes on stuffed animals.
**Solution:** Remove any dangerous items from the crib. Remove any large toys that children could climb on to get out of the crib.

**9 Avoid the use of walkers**
**Problem:** Falls, head injury, finger pinching
**Check** to see if there are stairs leading to or from the child care area. Get down at the level of a walker and see what the child might crash into.
**Solution:** Don't use walkers. They have been banned in Canada because so many children have been seriously injured. They tip easily and are dangerous in homes with stairs. They do not help children learn to walk sooner. If you do decide to use walkers, make sure stairs are securely blocked off. Move objects or furniture that could injure a child, and make sure that rug edges are taped down. Supervise the child at all times.

**10 Avoid the use of homemade pacifiers**
**Problem:** Strangulation
**Check** to see if children arrive with necklaces or homemade pacifiers.
**Solution:** Never use homemade pacifiers. Don't let young children wear necklaces or any other cords around their necks. Pacifier guards should be strong enough and big enough to keep children from sucking the pacifier into their mouths. The guard should have holes in it so babies can breath even if they get the guard in their mouths.

**11 Avoid using the microwave to heat bottles**
**Problem:** Burns
**Check** how you heat bottles or baby food.
**Solution:** Do not use microwaves — microwaves heat unevenly, and the food continues to cook for up to 1 minute after you take it out of the oven. You can feed babies formula mixed with lukewarm water and baby food right out of the cupboard at room temperature. Toddlers often accept milk and food from the refrigerator with no fuss, so you can avoid heating bottles or baby food. If you use a microwave, always shake and test the bottle about one minute after it comes out of the oven. Never microwave breast milk. Always stir and test baby food before serving it.

# Outdoor Play

1 **Child play area clear of hazards**
**Problem:** Falls, cuts
**Check** the play area for hazards such as lawn and garden tools, broken toys, construction materials, barbecue equipment, unstacked wood, trash not in containers, old cars, or tree roots.
**Solution:** Remove or fence all hazards.

2 **Play area fenced**
**Problem:** Hit by a car, drowning
**Check** to see how close your yard is to any dangerous area such as the street, water (lake, river, pond, stream, well), or a vacant lot with trash. The children's play area should be at least 200 feet from any dangerous area or it should be fenced.
**Solution:** Install a fence if appropriate. Always stay outside to closely supervise young children when they are playing. Ignore phone calls when you're outside, or get an answering machine or portable phone for outdoor time.

3 **Play equipment placed at least 6 feet away from other structures**
**Problem:** Falls
**Check** to see how far play equipment is placed from vehicles, fences, walk ways, trees, large rocks, and other play equipment. Recommended minimum spacing is 6 feet between play equipment and other items and 8 feet between two pieces of play equipment.
**Solution:** Move play equipment to at least the minimum correct distance from other objects in the yard.
**Other play equipment safety concerns:** All equipment should be anchored securely with concrete footings — the footings should be below ground and not exposed. All moving parts should be oiled and work smoothly.

4 **Cover the sandbox**
**Problem:** Disease from animal feces
**Check** whether the sandbox or any area where the children dig and play in dirt or sand is covered when not in use.
**Solution:** You can buy a sandbox with a cover. If you use a homemade sandbox or sand area, you can cover it with a tarpaulin or wooden cover. If the sandbox is not used regularly, uncover it a short while before use. Rake or sift the sand regularly to remove objects and allow in air and sun to cut down on germs and prevent mildew.

5 **Use a sprinkler or hose for water play**
**Problem:** Drowning, diseases passed through water
**Check** whether you use a wading pool or another type of water play.

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**Solution:** Use a sprinkler or hose for water play and to cool down children on hot days. Avoid wading pools; they can spread diseases, especially for children who are not toilet-trained. Another idea for water play is to give each child his or her own bucket or basin of water. Close supervision is vital.

**6 Empty standing water from container**
**Problem:** Drowning, diseases passed through water
**Check** buckets and wading pools every time it rains. Children can drown in less than an inch of water. Check pails used for cleaning.
**Solution:** Dump standing water. At picnics, drain water from the ice chest as the ice melts. Never leave children unsupervised with water, even to answer the phone.

**7 Play area has impact-absorbing surface**
**Problem:** Falls
**Check** the surface under your play equipment. Dirt, grass, asphalt or concrete are not safe surfaces. They will not absorb the force of a child's fall.
**Solution:** Remove any high play equipment such as slides or climbing bars, or put in a safe surface which is 1 foot (deep) of sand or woodchips extending out at least 6 feet from the edge of equipment. These surfaces need to be regularly maintained by raking. In cold regions when temperatures go below freezing, sand needs to be loosened with a rake or shovel. Also, the sand or woodchips must be replenished on a regular basis. Of course you can't cover sand in this area. But since children should *never* play underneath large play equipment, you don't need to be as concerned about animal contamination there. Although appropriate play surfaces can be expensive, outdoor play is one of the most common causes of injury.

**Unsafe S-hook and chain**

**8 All protruding bolts and screws on play equipment are covered**
**Problem:** Cuts
**Check** play equipment for any bolts or screws that stick out. Also check for sharp or jagged edges or rusty sections.
**Solution:** Cover any bolt or screw that sticks out with a plastic cap (available at a local hardware store). If equipment is seriously rusted or has broken parts, it should be repaired or thrown out.

**Close all S-hooks and cover metal chains with plastic tubing**

**9 Swing S hooks are completely closed**
**Problem:** Pinching, fingers
**Check** swings or other equipment for S hooks.
**Solution:** Make sure all S hooks are closed completely to prevent children's fingers from catching in them. Closed hooks should look like the number 8.

**10 Swing chainlink openings are less than 5/8 inches**
**Problem:** Pinching
**Check** swings to see if they are hung by chains.
**Solution:** Replace chains with nylon rope. Or cover chains with plastic

tubing to prevent children from pinching their fingers.
**Other swing safety concerns:** Swing seats should be made of canvas or plastic, not wood or metal. Teach children not to walk or play in the swing area — it should be for swinging only.

11 **Storage areas such as garages, barns, or sheds locked**
**Problem:** Poisoning, cuts
**Check** all outbuildings such as garages, sheds, barns to make sure they can be locked or barricaded from children.
**Solution:** Install locks on doors. Teach children to stay out of these areas.

12 **Swimming pool safety**
**Problem:** Drowning
**Check** local regulations and public standards for safe pool practices. Regularly check your pool for proper maintenance.
**Solution:** Drowning is a major cause of child deaths. Constant adult supervision is the key to avoiding pool tragedies. If you have more than 3 children using the pool or inside the fenced pool area (not counting an infant in a playpen), you should have an assistant to help you supervise the children. Ideally, you should install a 5 foot fence with a self-locking gate and a safety pool cover. For above ground pools, make sure ladders or steps are removed or locked in the "up" position when the pool is not in use. Do not install above-ground pools under 4 feet in height unless they are fenced off or you are sure that you will empty them after each use. Check these safety features to make sure they are in use at all times and working properly. Teach older children and family members to always keep your pool gates locked and doors leading to the pool deck closed and locked. Store toys and floats away from the pool. Have a telephone at the pool so that you can answer calls without interrupting supervision. Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for infants and children and keep your certification up-to-date. Keep rescue equipment by the pool.

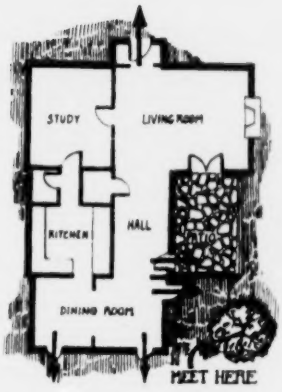
# Emergency Planning

1 **Local community emergency numbers posted by your phone**
**Problem:** Being unprepared for an emergency
**Check** to see which emergency numbers you have posted near your phone. Check your local phone book to see which community agencies to include on your list.
**Solution:** Post all emergency numbers including fire, police, ambulance, hospital, and poison control center directly on or next to the phone. You also may add phone numbers where you can reach the children's parents and the names and phone numbers of your emergency backup providers.

**2 Your phone number, address, and directions to your house posted**
**Problem:** Being unprepared in an emergency
**Check** to make sure you have posted your own phone number, address and directions to your home next to the phone. Check to see if your street number is posted on your building, house, or mailbox.
**Solution:** In an emergency, a neighbor, babysitter, backup provider or even a school age child may be the person to make a phone call for help. That's why you want to be sure to have your own phone, address and directions clearly posted. Make sure that directions give the closest main road, the closest cross street, and a description of your house, building or trailer. Post your street and/or apartment number in a easy-to-see spot outside your home. You may have to ask your landlord to do this if you are a renter.

**3 Two people for emergency backup care**
**Problem:** Being unprepared for good supervision during an emergency
**Check** with nearby friends and neighbors to find at least 2 people who are available during your child care hours. They should live within 10 minutes of your home. Check your local family child care regulations to see if there are any other requirements.
**Solution:** Post the names and phone numbers of your 2 backup providers by the phone.

**4 Children's emergency numbers are available**
**Problem:** Being unprepared for an emergency
**Check** to make sure you have records with up-to-date phone numbers including each child's parent(s) at work, family doctor, any medical problems or allergies, and a signed statement from parents allowing transportation to medical care in an emergency.
**Solution:** Make an emergency card for each child including the above information. Another idea is to include a picture of each child on his or her card just in case the child becomes separated from the group. Take these cards, the parent permission forms, and your first aid kit whenever you go out, whether it is for a walk, to run an errand, or for a field trip.




**Emergency evacuation plan**

**5 Monthly practice with a written emergency evacuation plan**
**Problem:** Being unprepared for an emergency
**Check** your child care area and locate 2 possible routes of exit from each room. (See item #12, on page 30, for more about exits.)
**Solution:** Prepare a written emergency escape plan for a fire or other emergency. Contact your local fire department for help in making your escape plan. Plan a meeting place outside that is away from both the building and the area where the fire engines would park. Post the plan so it is a visual reminder to you, your assistant or emergency backup providers. Practice this evacuation every month with the children — even if they are too young to really understand. You must be sure you can get all the children out — especially those who cannot yet walk — in an orderly and prompt manner.

This is an important reason that many states have limited the number of children a provider can care for. A good ratio is 1 provider to 6 children with not more than 2 children under 2 years old. You can make the practice into a fun game so it is not scary for children. This is very important because a child's instinct in a fire is to hide in a closet or under a piece of furniture. Teach older children to crawl low where the cleanest air is and to feel a door before they open it. If the door is hot, the child needs to pick another route of escape. The tragedy of fire in child care has happened to other providers — don't say, "It can't happen to me." Let parents know what you are doing about fire safety and encourage them to make an escape plan for their own home.

**6 First aid kit**
**Problem:** Being unprepared in an emergency
**Check** your first aid supplies.
**Solution:** Keep your first aid supplies on hand. (See the first aid resource page at the back of this booklet.) Only give syrup of ipecac in a poisoning if you are directed to do so by the Poison Control Center. Keep a list of your first aid contents taped to the inside cover of your kit. Check supplies regularly and buy more as needed.

**7 First aid supplies stored in a portable kit out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Being unprepared in an emergency.
**Check** to make sure that first aid items are in a portable kit. Find a place to keep the kit that is convenient to you but out of children's reach.
**Solution:** Bring your first aid kit with you on all outings whether you go on a walk, drive or for a field trip. A big pocketbook, lunchbox, or sturdy shopping bag works well.

**8 Pressurized fire extinguisher**
**Problem:** Being unprepared in an emergency
**Check** your fire extinguisher to make sure it is charged. (The arrow should be in the green area of the pressure gauge.) It should be labelled Type B, Type AB, or Type ABC. Place it in the kitchen, away from the stove and near an exit. The extinguisher should be mounted on the wall in full view. If you keep it inside a cabinet, be sure to put up a sign "Fire Extinguisher Inside". Check with your local fire department if you need to recharge your extinguisher or if you need instructions on using it.
**Solution: If a fire does occur, always evacuate the children first.** Make sure someone is supervising the children and someone else is contacting the fire department before you decide to return and fight the fire. **Never try to fight a large fire** (one that spreads beyond a pan on the stove or the inside of a waste basket); home fire extinguishers are designed only for small fires. Keep your fire extinguisher in ready condition, in a convenient location, and know how to use it. Never throw water on a grease or electrical fire.

**9 Working smoke detectors**
**Problem:** Being unprepared in an emergency
**Check** to make sure you have at least one smoke detector on each level of your home. The detector should be mounted on the ceiling. The best locations are outside bedrooms, at the foot of stairs and at the top of basement stairs. Detectors should not be placed near windows, doors, or heating or air conditioning vents, where smoke could get blown away from them. They should not be put in kitchens, where cooking smoke can set them off. Smoke detectors should have a test button and you should test them monthly. Battery-operated detectors should have the batteries replaced at least once a year. Pick a birthday or an anniversary date as a reminder. These detectors will usually make an irregular beeping sound when the batteries are getting low.
**Solution:** Install the correct number of smoke detectors for your home and check them regularly. Call your local fire department if you need help in placing the detectors. Working smoke detectors can cut the number of fire deaths in half.

**10 Working flashlight**
**Problem:** Being unprepared in case of an emergency.
**Check** to make sure you have a working flashlight and keep it out of children's reach.
**Solution:** Buy a battery operated or rechargeable flashlight. Check it monthly to make sure it works. Keep it out of children's reach. A flashlight is useful if the electricity goes out, especially in a storm.

**11 Children are always located on the same floor as you**
**Problem:** Emergency evacuation
**Check** your child care setup to find a place where children can nap or play and be on the same level as you.
**Solution:** Plan your daily schedule so you will be able to supervise children at all times — even during meal preparation and cleanup. Plan to check napping children every 15 minutes. Many providers are used to putting their own children upstairs to nap. This practice is not safe unless you and all the children remain on the same level. If you do nighttime care, the children should sleep on the same level as you. Emergencies can happen; children have died in fires in child care homes. Don't say, "It can't happen to me" as an excuse for not being prepared.

**12 Two clear exits to the outside**
**Problem:** Emergency evacuation
**Check** your child care area and identify two exits from each room.
**Solution:** Plan your exits. Clear any furniture, boxes, or clutter that may block an exit. If one of the exits is a stairway, you can keep a safety gate at the top and bottom of the stairs. You could always kick it out in the event of an emergency. For a first floor apartment, you can use a window for an exit if it is big enough for you to get through.

13 **Trained in first aid**
**Problem:** Being unprepared for an emergency
**Check** with your local Red Cross, hospital, or fire department to find out about first aid training. You should have training in first aid, rescue breathing, and the anti-choking maneuver that is specific to infants and children. Additionally, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) is recommended for providers who have a pool or live near water or who work with a special needs child when the child's individual plan requires supervision by a CPR-certified caregiver.
**Solution:** Be trained to give basic first aid emergencies and to deal with life-threatening emergencies. Take an American Red Cross or other certified course and stay current.

# Health and Hygiene

1 **Handwashing**
**Problem:** Spread of germs and sickness
**Check** to make sure you have a good plan for handwashing.
**Solution:** Practice good handwashing for you and the children. It is your best tool to prevent the spread of sickness. Organize your daily schedule to include good handwashing habits. Photocopy and post the handwashing resource page at the back of this booklet as a reminder near your sink. Teach children good handwashing techniques. Tell them to cough or sneeze toward the floor (not into their hands) and away from other children. Have preschool children practice using tissues and throwing them away by themselves. If your hands get chapped from frequent handwashing, keep hand lotion by your sink and use it each time.

2 **Wash hands with soap and running water and use individual towels**
**Problem:** Spread of germs and sickness
**Check** your handwashing supplies and setup.
**Solution:** Handwashing is most effective when you use running water to rinse the dirt and germs down the sink. Using a container of water will only spread the germs around. Disposable wipes do not clean hands as well as soap and water and should be used only when you cannot use a sink. Liquid soap is better than bar soap because children are better at spreading liquid soap on all parts of their hands and it is easier to keep the soap container clean. Use paper towels or a separate cloth towel for each person (maybe a different color for each child). One towel for all just spreads germs since children do not always do a good job handwashing. Introduce these changes gradually and supervise children so they don't waste the soap and paper towels. You can dilute liquid soap by half with water.

Don't fill the soap dispenser all the way if you think children will pump it down the drain. Also, clean sinks and counters regularly with soap and water and sanitize them with bleach solution. (See the next item for a bleach recipe.)

**3 Clean and sanitize dirty toys and surfaces**
**Problem:** Spread of germs and sickness
**Check** the way in which you sanitize surfaces and toys used in the child care area.
**Solution:** Follow a regular schedule of cleaning dirty or contaminated surfaces including high chair trays, table tops, diaper changing surfaces, and potty chairs. You can make an inexpensive sanitizing solution by adding one tablespoon of bleach to one quart of water. This must be made fresh each day. You can store it in a spray bottle out of children's reach. Then, after cleaning dirty surfaces with soap and water, spray them with the bleach solution and allow them to air dry. This is not toxic so you can use it on plastic toys too. Clean hard toys that children have mouthed in the dishwasher or by the same method. If you have cloth toys be sure they are machine washable.

**4 Throw away contaminated trash**
**Problem:** Spread of germs and sickness
**Check** your plan for handling contaminated trash. This includes used tissues, bandages, and soiled diapers.
**Solution:** You should use a covered, lined trash container. This should be emptied daily or more frequently as needed. Other choices for trash are a push top, lined container or an open top container placed out of children's reach inside a locked cabinet or in an inside area separated from the child care area by a safety gate. For soiled diapers, a foot pedal-operated container that is lined with a plastic trash bag is recommended.

**5 Store contaminated, reusable items to send home**
**Problem:** Spread of germs and sickness
**Check** your plan for handling reusable items contaminated with blood, mucus, urine, feces, vomit, or diarrhea.
**Solution:** Put any contaminated item in a leakproof bag (double plastic bags are good) and send it home for the parents to launder. If you launder these items in your washing machine, you may contaminate your machine and any wash you do afterwards. If you do launder contaminated items, do not mix them in with your regular wash. Use a hot water wash and dry them in the dryer on "high". Disinfect your washing machine by running a rinse cycle with a cup of bleach poured in.

**6 Diapering**
**Problem:** Spread of germs and sickness, falls
**Check** the resource pages on diapering for guidelines on a safe and healthy

**Diapering area**

diapering procedure. Though diapering may be something that you are very familiar with, following a few simple steps can protect you and the children in your care from spreading diarrheal illnesses.
**Solution:** Follow the diapering procedure carefully. Always keep one hand on the child while he/she is on the changing surface. Do not change diapers on rugs, couches, beds, or other nonwaterproof surfaces. Place a non-absorbent disposable covering on the surface to catch most of the germs. You can use easy-to-find materials such as wax paper, freezer wrap, deli paper, or shelf paper. Use disposable wipes each time the child is changed. Wipe the child from front to back and use each wipe only once. Discard the dirty diaper, disposable cover, and wipes in a lined, covered container, preferably foot-pedal operated. Clean the changing surface using soap and water and spray with a bleach solution (See item #3, above) to sanitize. Allow it to air dry. Wash the child's hands, then yours.

7 **Cat litter boxes kept out of children's reach**
**Problem:** Sickness from contaminated cat feces
**Check** where the cat litter box is kept.
**Solution:** The cat litter box should be kept in a room away from the child care area and not within children's reach. Litter box covers are available.

8 **Keep up-to-date records for each child**
**Problem:** Being unprepared for an injury or sickness
**Check** your record keeping to make sure you have basic records on each child. Check your local child care regulations to see what records are required.
**Solution:** Keep up-to-date records on each child in your program. This protects you and gives you information you may need in an emergency, such as whether the child has had a tetanus shot or if he/she is allergic to any medications.

9 **Agency to contact in case of suspected child abuse or neglect**
**Problem:** Child abuse and neglect
**Check** procedures in your state for reporting child abuse and neglect. In some states, state laws or child care regulations require child care providers to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.
**Solution:** Each day as you greet each child, be sure to notice any unusual signs of injury or illness. If you notice anything unusual, ask the parent about it. Note an injury on your injury report form. This is for your protection as well as the child's. You should always make a report if you suspect child abuse or neglect. If you need training on recognizing signs of abuse or reporting a case, contact a child care resource and referral or social service agency in your community. Learn about positive forms of discipline and share your ideas and practices with parents.

Date: _____

# Plan of action

Take items that are listed as "No" on the checklist and write them on this plan of action. Choose items that you have not been able to change immediately. Decide which items are most important to change immediately and list them in order. Then decide what steps you need to take to make each change. Check or date the item when you have completed it. Decide when you need to do the entire checklist again. You'll be able to see what you have accomplished and what still needs to be done.

| Checklist item needing change | Steps to take | Check or date when done |
|---|---|---|
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Date of next review of checklist: _____

## Family Child Care Health & Safety Resource Agency List

**The following is a list of helpful agencies that you may find in your community.**

**American Red Cross** — first aid training, parenting information

**State Child Care Regulatory Agency** — child care regulations

**Child Care Resource and Referral Agency** — training and resources on a variety of child, parent, and provider issues

**Early Intervention Program** — assessments for potential developmental problems for children, birth to 3 years old

**Local Board of Health** — information on contagious diseases, reporting contagious diseases, immunization requirements, lead screening, state sanitary code requirements

**Child Care Food Programs** — nutrition education and reimbursement for food expenses

**Cooperative Extension (State Dept. of Agriculture)** — information on nutrition, child development, small business issues

**State Department of Public Health** — information on health, injury prevention, and child care. Resources available to providers.

**State Department of Social Services** — reporting suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect and other social service information

**Association for the Education of Young Children** — professional development, training and political advocacy

**Association for Family Child Care** — local networks and support groups, professional development, advocacy

**National Dairy Council, Local Chapter** — information on nutrition and educational resources for preschool children

**Local Fire Department** — information on fire evacuation plans, regulations on woodstoves, fireplaces, and space heaters, exit routes from the home, installation of smoke detectors, instructions on fire extinguisher use

**American Cancer Society** — information on smoking cessation programs and the effect of secondhand smoke

**American Heart Association** — first aid courses and information on smoking cessation and secondhand smoke

# Mail order companies

**Clinitemp, Inc.**
P.O. Box 681130
Indianapolis, IN 46268
(317) 872-4155
Available: Hot water gauges

**F & H Child Safety Co.**
Box 2228
Evansville, IN 47714
(812) 479-8485
Available: Variety of supplies including cabinet latches and electrical outlet plugs and covers

**First Step Ltd. / Hand in Hand**
369 Congress Street
Boston, MA 02210
1-800-545-2280
Available: Fire escape ladder

**Lillian Vernon**
510 South Fulton Ave.
Mt. Vernon, NY 10550
To order: (914) 633-6300
Customer service: (914) 633-6400
Available: Variety of supplies including home childproofing kit, stoveguard

**Perfectly Safe**
7245 Whipple Ave. N. W.
North Canton, OH 44720
1-800-837-5437
Available: Variety of supplies including cabinet latches and electrical outlet plugs

**Railnet Corp.**
P.O. Box 7652
Boise, ID 83707
(208) 377-2844
Available: Deck and balcony railing guard

**Right Start Catalog**
Right Start Plaza
6403 Alondra Blvd.
Paramount, CA 90723
1-800-548-8531
Available: Variety of supplies including auto safety seats and home childproofing supplies

**Schoolmasters Safety**
745 State Circle Box 1941
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
(313) 761-5072
Available: signs, fencing, first aid supplies, mats

**Toys to Grow on**
2695 E. Dominguez St.
P. O. Box 17
Long Beach, CA 90801
(213) 603-8890
Available: "choke" test tubes for small parts/small objects

This list is compiled for your information only. Work/Family Directions Development Corp. does not endorse, guarantee, or recommend any of the products sold through the companies on this list.

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# Resource pages

# STOP, DROP, and ROLL

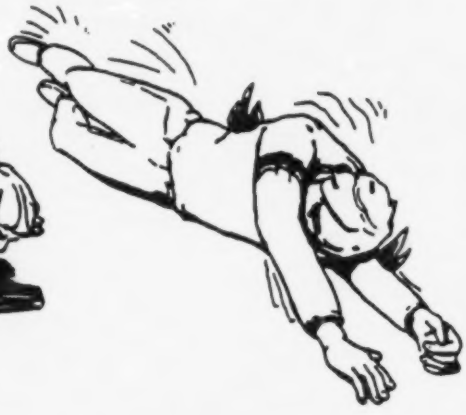
Young children have saved their own lives by dropping and rolling when their clothes caught fire.

## STOP

STOP where you are—do not run.

## DROP

DROP to the ground or to the floor and cover your face with your hands.



## ROLL

ROLL to put out the flames.

## COOL

COOL the burn right away with water only.

GET medical help.

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Teach your child (age 3 or older) to STOP, DROP, and ROLL.

Statewide Comprehensive Injury Prevention Program
Mass. Department of Public Health, Division of Family Health Services
150 Tremont Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 727-1246
For more information, call your local health department.

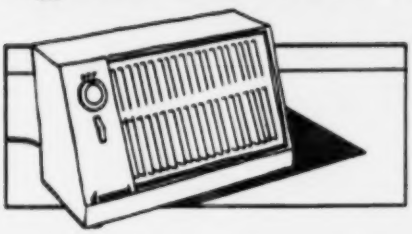
**SCIPP**

# HOME HEATING SAFETY

Space heaters and wood stoves – if allowed in your state and if used safely – can provide extra warmth during the winter months. Heating devices that are placed or maintained poorly can cause serious fires, injuries, and deaths.

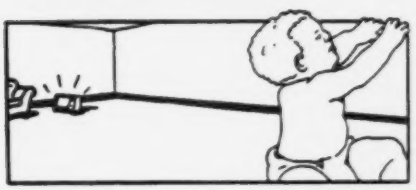
Follow these steps to avoid fire and burns from heating devices.

## Space heaters should:

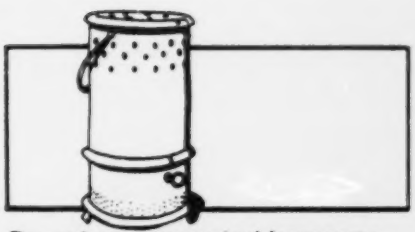


- Be stable (so they don't tip over).
- Be at least 3 feet from things that can catch fire (e.g., curtains, papers, furniture).
- Have a screen or other barrier around them.
- Comply with any other state or local regulations.

## Important:



**Keep children away from heaters** so that they can't get burned or stick paper or other things into a heater.



**Do not use unvented kerosene heaters.** (They are illegal in Massachusetts.)

**Do not use your gas oven or charcoal for heat.** The fumes can harm or kill your family, especially while you sleep.

There are fuel-assistance programs to help families pay their heating bills. Call your city hall to find out if you are eligible.

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Mass. Department of Public Health, Division of Family Health Services
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For more information, call your local health department.

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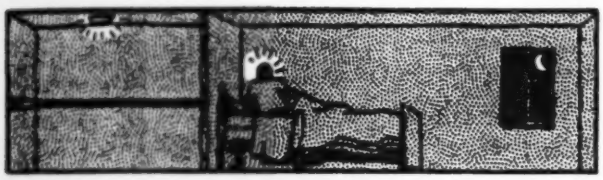
# SMOKE DETECTORS

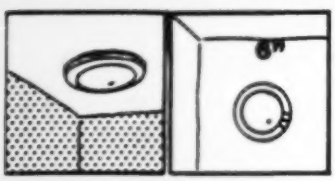
Most fatal fires occur at night while people are sleeping. A smoke detector will wake you when there is a fire, in time to save your life. A smoke detector *in working condition* will usually give you three minutes to escape.

## Who should have a smoke detector?

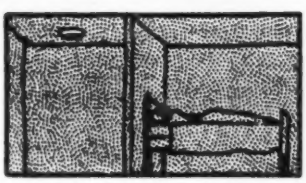


Every home should have *at least one* smoke detector. By Massachusetts law, landlords must provide smoke detectors in a building with three or more apartments. In some cities, such as Boston, all homes must have smoke detectors.

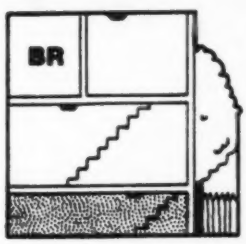
## Where should a smoke detector be placed?




on the ceiling, or on the wall 6-12" below the ceiling



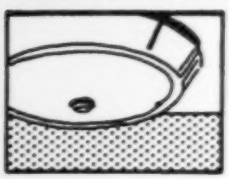
outside the sleeping areas




- at the foot of stairs that lead to floors where bedrooms are located.
- at the top of the basement stairs.

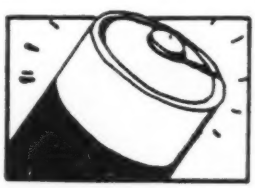
Multi-floor homes will need more than one detector.

## How should they be maintained?

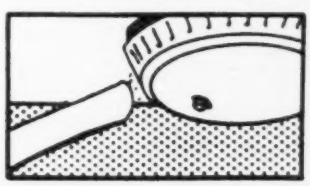


Smoke detectors can save lives *only* if they are working properly. Be sure to:

test them monthly by pushing test buttons or blowing smoke into them to make sure alarms work.



replace batteries when low, or at least once a year.



vacuum the detector gently to keep dust out.

**NEVER**

**remove batteries for use in toys, radios, etc.**

**disconnect them – if a smoke detector goes off from cooking fumes, move it to a better spot and reconnect it right away.**

**A smoke detector will not protect you if the batteries are removed.**

Statewide Comprehensive Injury Prevention Program
Mass. Department of Public Health, Division of Family Health Services
150 Tremont Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 727-1246
For more information, call your local health department.

**SCIPP**

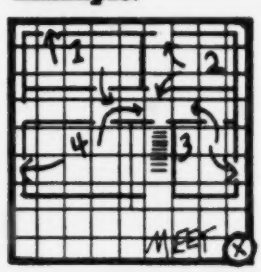
# FIRE
## ESCAPE PLAN

Making and practicing a fire escape plan can save lives when a fire breaks out. Most people die from smoke, not flames or heat. This four part plan could save your life!

1. **Install smoke detectors;** keep them in good working order.
2. **Plan your escape route** on a floor plan; decide on an outside meeting place.
3. **Discuss this with your family;** decide who will take charge of a child if a fire occurs.
4. **Practice your exit plan,** especially at night.

**Use this grid to draw a floor plan of each person's bedroom or to show the whole house.**

**Example:**




**1.** Draw two exits from each room.

**2.** Write down your outside meeting place.

**3.** Practice E.D.I.T.H. Exit Drills in the Home.

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150 Tremont Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 727-1246
For more information, call your local health department.

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# SAFE PLANTS

**Plants are a leading cause of poisoning to pre-schoolers. If eaten, some plants can cause a skin rash or stomach upset—others can even cause death.**

A sure way to prevent these poisonings inside the home is by substituting safe plants for poisonous ones. Here is a list of some common indoor plants that are safe for growing around young children.

| COMMON NAME | BOTANICAL NAME |
|---|---|
| African violet | Saintpaulia ionantha |
| Aluminum plant | Pilea cadierei |
| Begonia | Begonia semperflorens |
| Boston fern | Nephrolepis exaltata |
| Coleus | Coleus blumei |
| Dracaena | Dracaena fragrans |
| Hen-and-chickens | Sempervivum tectorum |
| Jade plant | Crassula argentea |
| Mother-in-law's tongue | Sansevieria trifasciata |
| Peperomia | Peperomia obtusifolia |
| Prayer plant | Maranta leuconeura |
| Rubber plant | Ficus elastica |
| Sensitive plant | Mimosa pudica |
| Spider plant | Chlorophytum comosum |
| Swedish ivy | Plectranthus australis |
| Wandering Jew | Tradescantia fluminensis |
| Wax plant | Hoya carnosa |
| Weeping fig | Ficus benjamina |

Fortunately, most plant poisonings can be prevented. Here are some ways: **Learn** which plants are poisonous. For help, check library books, garden and florist shops, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Arnold Arboreteum in Boston.
**Keep** young children away from all plants. Eating too much of even a 'safe' plant can make a child sick.
**Remove** poisonous plants from the area.
**Supervise** young children closely around plants.
**Teach** children not to put plants, fruits, and berries in their mouths.

There is no rule of thumb to help you tell a poisonous plant from a safe one. You can get help identifying plants from library books, garden and florist shops, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Arnold Arboreteum in Boston.

**If you think your child may have swallowed any part of a poisonous plant, first remove any remaining pieces from the child's mouth. Then bring your child and a piece of the plant to the phone and call your local poison control center.**

Statewide Comprehensive Injury Prevention Program
Mass. Department of Public Health, Division of Family Health Services
150 Tremont Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 727-1246
For more information, call your local health department.

**SCIPP**

# POISONOUS PLANTS

**Children are often attracted to the colorful berries, flowers, fruits and leaves of plants. But over 700 plants in the U.S. and Canada have been identified as poisonous. These can be found anywhere—in your neighbor's or your own house, in florist shops and grocery stores, in yards, in the woods and on playgrounds.**

**Plants are a common cause of poisoning to preschoolers. Most of these poisonings can be prevented, so it's important for parents, grandparents, babysitters and day care workers to know if poisonous plants are near children.**

**If eaten, some plant parts can cause a skin rash or stomach upset; others can even cause death. Here is a partial list of indoor and outdoor plants that are very dangerous—children have died from eating these.**

Autumn crocus
Azalea
Baneberry
Belladonna
Black cherry
Black locust
Black snakeroot
Buckeye
Caladium
Caper spurge
Castor bean
Cherry
Chinaberry
Daffodil bulbs
Daphne
Delphinium
Dieffenbachia
Dumbcane
Duranta
False hellebore
Foxglove
Golden chain
Hyacinth
Hydrangea
Jequirity bean
Jessamine
Jimson weed
Larkspur
Lantana
Laurel
Lily-of-the-valley
Lupine
Mistletoe
Monkshood
Moonseed
Mountain laurel
Mushrooms
Nightshade
Oleander
Poison hemlock
Pokeweed
Privet
Rhododendron
Rhubarb leaves
Rosary pea
Rubber vine
Sandbox tree
Tansy
Thorn apple
Tobacco
Tung oil tree
Water hemlock
White snakeroot
Yellow jessamine
Yellow oleander
Yew

There is no rule of thumb to help you tell a poisonous plant from a safe one. You can get help in identifying plants from library books, garden and florist shops, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Arnold Arboreteum in Boston.

**If you think your child may have swallowed any part of a poisonous plant, first remove any remaining pieces from the child's mouth. Then bring your child and a piece of the plant to the phone and call your local poison control center.**

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For more information, call your local health department.

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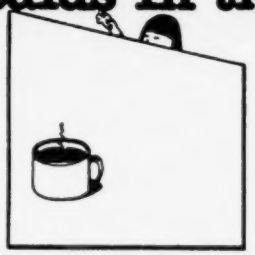
# PREVENTING SCALDS

**Hot foods and liquid can burn your child like fire!**

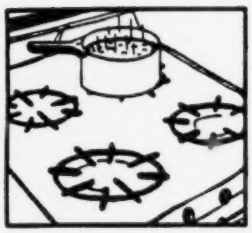
Scald burns from **hot foods, hot liquids, grease** and **bath water,** can be painful and very serious. Many scalds occur to toddlers 1 - 2 years old who are beginning to walk, climb, and REACH.

## To prevent scalds in the kitchen

Keep hot foods and drinks away from the edge of tables and counters. Don't leave them on a tablecloth that could be grabbed by your child.



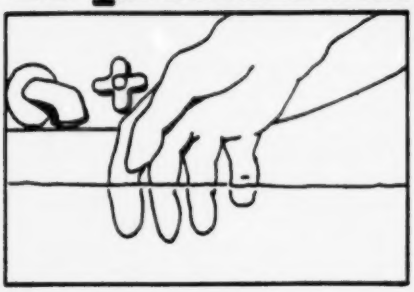
If you're holding something hot—like coffee—put your baby in a safe place. You can't hold both safely.



Keep your child in a safe place—away from the stove—while you are cooking. Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove where a child is less likely to reach.

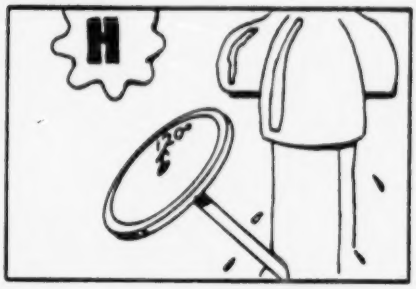
Always test your child's heated food—especially bottles. Be very careful to test food heated in a microwave oven—it could be dangerously hot.

## To prevent scalds in the bathroom:



Always check the water before placing your child in the tub. A child's skin is more tender than an adult's, and more easily burned by hot water.

Watch your child during bathtime. Don't leave your child alone—***even to answer the phone or the door.*** Children like the fun of running water, and may be burned if they turn on the faucet themselves. Older children have also scalded their younger brother or sister when they tried to help out at bathtime. An adult always needs to be with the child while they are bathing!




Measure the temperature of your hot tap water (let it run for 3 minutes) with a meat, candy, or water thermometer. For safe bathing, it should be 120° ***or lower.*** (Mass. law allows tap-water temperature to be between 110°-130° only). If the water is ***over 120°,*** lower the hot water heater setting to low or warm. (If you rent, you may need to ask your landlord to do this).

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# IF YOU SUSPECT A POISONING

The Massachusetts Poison Center received 66,000 calls in 1985 related to cases of poisoning; 65% of these to children under-age 5. Most occurred from swallowing common household items like medicine, cleaners, vitamins and poisonous plants. Many poisonings can be treated safely at home IF YOU CALL FOR MEDICAL ADVICE FIRST.

## Be prepared:...

- Keep a bottle of Ipecac Syrup in your home. Ipecac Syrup is used as a treatment for some poisonings and can be purchased at a drugstore for under $2.00.

**LOCAL POISON INFORMATION CENTER**

**Phone:**_____

- Keep this number on your telephone. (If you don't have a Massachusetts Poison Center telephone sticker, cut this out and tape it to your phone.) If you do not have a phone, ask a neighbor if you can put the Poison Center number on her phone for use in an emergency.

## If you think your child may have swallowed a poison...

1. Look in the child's mouth. Remove any remaining pills, pieces of plant, etc.

2. Bring the child and the poison or container to the phone. Do not give your child *anything* by mouth (not even water or milk) until you call the Poison Center or your doctor.

3. Call the Poison Center. Their trained medical staff will give you immediate treatment advice over the phone, toll-free, 24 hours a day. Be prepared to give your child's age and weight, the product name and the amount swallowed, if known.

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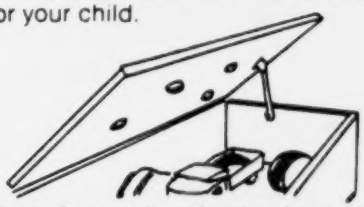
# TOY SAFETY

Toys should be a source of fun and learning for your child. But all too often, toys with poor design, toys that are too old for your child or are used incorrectly, or toys in bad repair can lead to serious, even fatal injuries. Follow these steps to keep your child playing happily and safely:

Choose your child's toys carefully. Read the package labels or ask someone at the store about safe toys for your child.

If a toy is labeled "for children ages 3 and older," don't give it to a child under age 3. It could have small parts or sharp pieces that are dangerous to younger children.

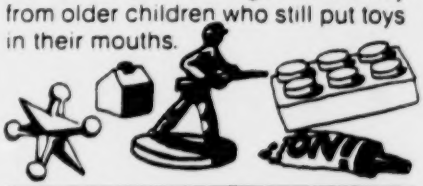


If you have a toy chest at home, be sure it has a lid support and air holes. If it doesn't, ***remove the lid.*** A lid that slams shut could cause head injuries or suffocation.

If your child is on a riding toy, keep him or her away from stairs, porches, cars, and pools.

Help older children to keep their toys where your baby or toddler cannot reach them. Older children may enjoy decorating a shoe box as their treasure box—to be kept up high—safely beyond the reach of younger brothers and sisters.

Keep *any* toy with small parts away from children under age 3 ***and*** away from older children who still put toys in their mouths.




**Check your child's toys for these hazards. If they can't be repaired, throw them out!**

- Sharp points, jagged edges, rough surfaces.
- Small detachable parts that could be swallowed or stuck in the throat, nose or ears.
- Sharp spikes or pins that have become exposed if your child has pulled the toy apart.
- Long cords or strings on tots' toys. If the cord is over 12 inches, cut it shorter.
- Squeakers or other noise makers that are not securely attached to the toy and that could be removed and swallowed.
- Caps, guns and other toys that produce a very loud noise and could damage hearing.
- Nuts, bolts and clamps that are loose.
- Electric toys with frayed or loose wires. These should be thrown out if repairs would cost too much. Electrical wiring should state: UL approved.

**CAUTION:** **Deflated or broken balloons are dangerous! Keep them away from your child. When these are swallowed, they cause children to suffocate.**

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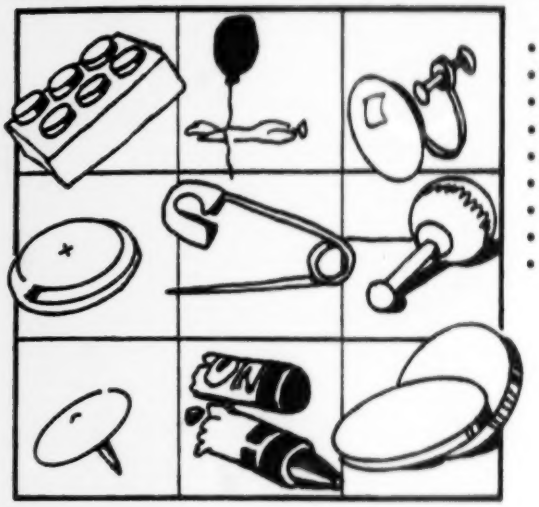
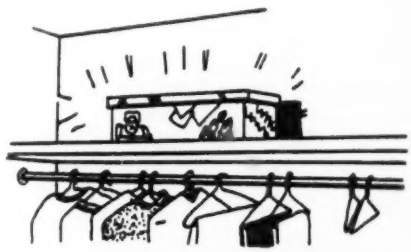
# PREVENTING CHOKING

Choking on foods and objects is the fourth leading cause of death in young children.

**Children will put anything in their mouths; protect them by keeping these and other small items out of their reach.**



- small parts of a toy
- broken or deflated balloons
- jewelry
- button batteries
- safety pins
- unsafe rattles
- nails, tacks, screws
- crayon pieces
- coins



**Older children with small toys may enjoy decorating a shoe box as their treasure box—to be kept up high—safely beyond the reach of younger brothers and sisters.**

**Some foods can cause young children to choke. Round, hard foods are especially dangerous to young children.**

**Ask your doctor if your child is old enough (usually around age 4) to have foods like these:**

- hot dogs (#1 cause of food choking in children)
- nuts
- hard candies
- carrots
- popcorn
- grapes
- raisins

## Reminders:

Don't let your child run with anything in his or her mouth (rattle, lollipop, food, pencil).

Don't let your child lie down while eating.

Never leave your baby alone with a propped-up bottle.

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# CHILD SUPERVISION

Being a parent is hard work and it's important for parents to have time to relax away from their children. However, babies and young children cannot take care of themselves and should not be left home alone—*even for a few minutes.* Children have been injured and killed by fires, drownings, falls, and other causes when left home alone.

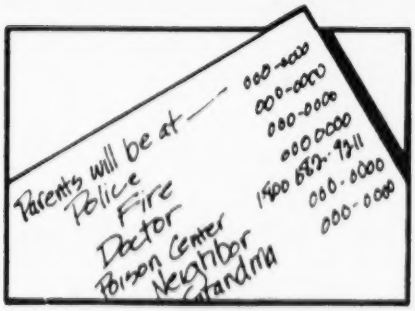
## To protect your child:

- *Never* leave your child at home alone or with another child. If you leave the house, ***even for a minute.*** TAKE YOUR CHILD WITH YOU or get a responsible person to watch your child.

- Another child—even a brother or a sister—should not be left to take care of your baby until that child is old enough to do so (around age 12 or 13).

- *Never* leave your children alone in a car.

## Anyone who babysits should be able to:




- Understand what to do in case of a fire.
- Use a telephone to call the police or hospital.
- Reach the parent or another adult in an emergency.
- Call the police if someone tries to break in.

Parents may find it helpful to exchange babysitting with other neighbors. It will give your children other playmates and you child care at no cost.

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# DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IPECAC SYRUP?

An estimated one million poisonings occur in the United States each year. No one is immune to poisoning, and small children are especially at risk. If someone in your home swallows a poison, what will you do? The following information is intended to help you do the right thing if your child swallows a poison.

The most important item to have in your home when that poisoning occurs is syrup of ipecac. Your poison center or doctor may not always recommend that you have the patient vomit, but if they do, you should do it with **IPECAC SYRUP.**

## Why?

The treatment for many poisonings requires removal of the toxic substance from the stomach before absorption occurs. **IPECAC SYRUP** is safer than many other methods for removing these toxic substances. Sticking your finger down a child's throat or using salt water are not as effective and can be dangerous to the victim.

## What?

**IPECAC SYRUP** causes vomiting to occur. The syrup will keep for several years if stored at room temperature.

## When?

**IPECAC SYRUP** should not be used in every poisoning emergency. All poison ingestions do not require the removal of the poison from the stomach. **Before using IPECAC SYRUP,** check with your poison center or doctor to see if vomiting is necessary.

DO NOT use **IPECAC SYRUP** unless instructed to do so by your poison center or your doctor.

## Who?

**IPECAC SYRUP** can be used effectively with adults or children. **Make sure you follow the correct procedures.**

## Where?

**IPECAC SYRUP** may be obtained at any pharmacy. Your pharmacist is allowed to sell you one ounce (30 ml) without a prescription.

## How?

If vomiting with **IPECAC SYRUP** is recommended by your poison center or doctor, use the following procedure:

**For children one year of age or older:**
Give one tablespoon (15 ml) of **IPECAC SYRUP.** Follow it by at least one glass (8 ounces) of water. Have the victim drink more liquid is possible. If vomiting has not occurred within 20 minutes, the dose of **IPECAC SYRUP** can be repeated with more fluids. **ONLY REPEAT DOSAGE ONCE.** If vomiting does not occur, call your poison center or doctor again. The dose of **IPECAC SYRUP** is different for infants, older children and for adults. Your poison center or doctor will give you complete instructions.

**If a poisoning occurs:**

Call your local poison control center.

Phone:_____

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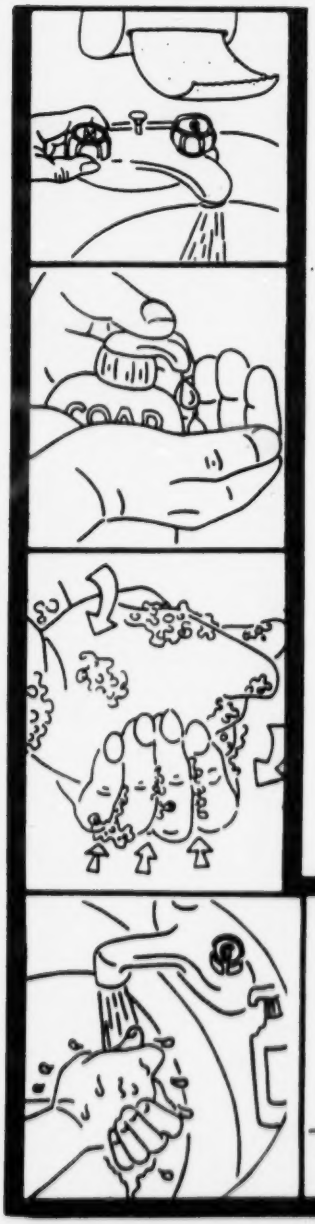
# How To Wash Your Hands




1. Use warm water and soap, preferably liquid.

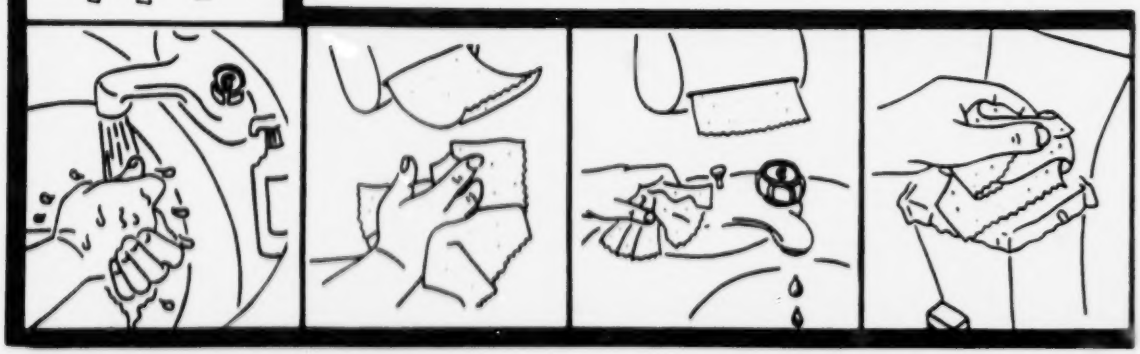
2. Rub your hands together, including:
   backs of hands
   wrists
   between fingers
   under fingernails.

3. Rinse well under running water.

4. Dry hands with paper towel.

5. Turn off water with the paper towel BEFORE throwing away into lined, covered step can.

6. Use hand lotion if necessary.



Adapted from: Preschool Enrichment Team, Inc., Holyoke, Massachusetts.
(May be reproduced)

# How To Change A Diaper

1. **CHECK to be sure supplies you need are ready. PLACE paper or other disposable cover on diapering surface.**

2. **LAY the child on the diapering surface. Hold the child only with your hands if the diaper is soiled. Never leave the *child* unattended.**

3. **REMOVE soiled diaper and clothes. PUT disposable diapers in a lined, covered step can. PUT soiled clothes or cloth diaper in a plastic bag to be taken home. Do *not* put in toilet; bulky stool may be emptied into toilet.**

4. **CLEAN the child's bottom with a moist disposable wipe. Wipe front to back using towelette only once. Repeat with fresh wipes if necessary. Pat dry. DISPOSE of the towelette or paper towel in a lined covered step can.**

5. **Wipe your hands with a moist disposable wipe. DISPOSE of it in the lined covered, step can.**

6. **DIAPER or dress the child. Now you can hold him or her close to you.**

7. **WASH the child's hands. Assist the child back to the group.**

8. **REMOVE disposable covering. Wash the diapering area and DISINFECT it with bleach solution made fresh daily. Then wash your hands.**

Adapted from: Preschool Enrichment Team, Inc., Holyoke, Massachusetts.
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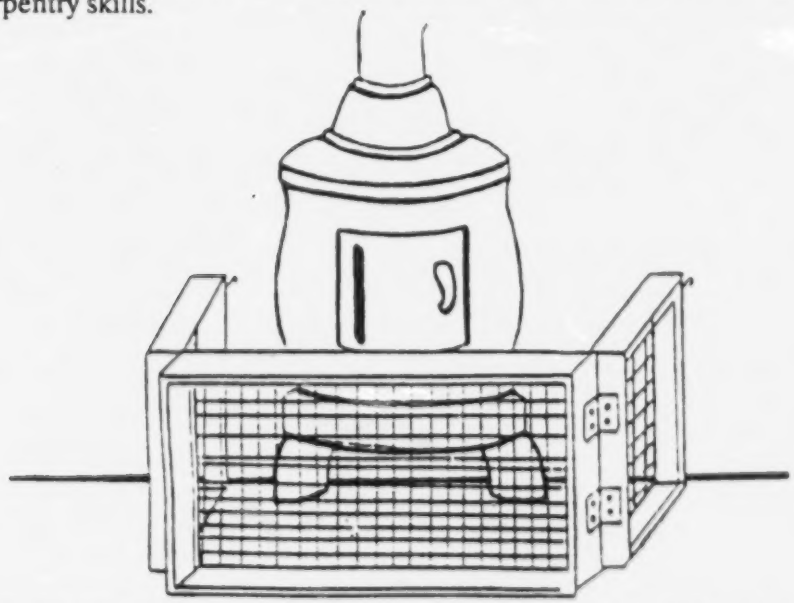
## CHILD-SAFE ENCLOSURE FOR WOOD BURNING STOVES

Barricades are necessary to prevent children from being accidentally burned or injured by falling against the stoves. Acceptable barricades can be constructed using simple tools and basic carpentry skills.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handsaw
- Hammer and Nails
- * Aluminum or Mesh Screening
- 2" x 3" Boards
- Hooks and Eyes (2 sets)
- Stapler and Staples

1. Construct a frame of 2" x 3" boards hinged at the corners. The frame must be large enough to eliminate a fire hazard (at least 36" away from the stove) and to prevent children from reaching the stove.

2. Attach one section of screening to the front of the frame. Secure screening with staples (attach screen from inside of frame so that sharp edges are not exposed). Attach sections of screening to both side sections of frame in similar manner.

3. Attach the unit to the wall behind the stove in two places with hooks and eyes.

This enclosure is removable for access by adults to the woodstove or for storage when day care is not occurring.

* Any variety of aluminum or wire mesh screening available at local hardware stores may be used.

Source: Massachusetts Office for Children

## RADIATOR SAFETY COVERS

RADIATOR COVERS ARE NECESSARY TO PREVENT CHILDREN FROM BEING ACCIDENTALLY BURNED AS WELL AS INJURED BY FALLING AGAINST THE RADIATORS. LOW-COST RADIATOR COVERS CAN BE CONSTRUCTED USING SIMPLE TOOLS AND BASIC CARPENTRY SKILLS.

1. MATERIALS NEEDED:

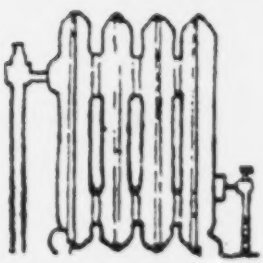
- Handsaw
- Hammer
- 2" Common Nails
- Sandpaper
- Stapler and Staples OR Screwdriver and 1/2" Wood Screws
- 2" x 3" Boards
- Hooks and Eyes (4 sets)

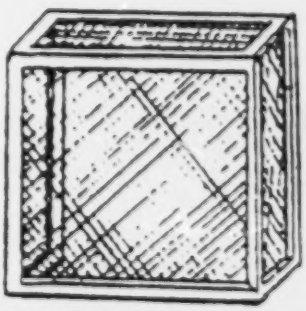
2. FRAMING THE RADIATOR COVER

The radiator cover should be made so that it does not rest directly on the hot radiator. The cover should be constructed so that it remains two to three inches away from the radiator itself.

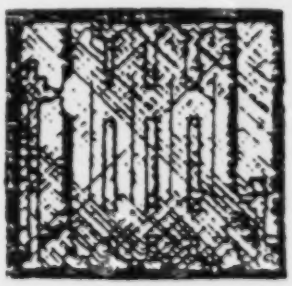
Measure length of boards needed to make frame. Using handsaw, cut 2" x 3" boards to needed lengths. Angle corners so that they can be properly assembled. Assemble frame by joining corners together using 2" common nails or corner brackets to secure each corner. Sand the frame so that there are no splinters.

EXPOSED RADIATOR





PROPERLY COVERED



3. SCREENING THE PREPARED FRAME

Using any variety of aluminum screening available at your local hardware store, cut the pieces needed to cover the top, front and sides of your frame. "Chickenwire" is not acceptable as children's fingers and other objects can be poked through. Attach the screening from the inside of the frame using 1" wood screws or heavy staples. Make sure that all areas are covered and that there are no sharp edges exposed.

4. SECURING THE RADIATOR COVER

Place the frame around the radiator, securing it to the wall at top and bottom with hooks and eyes. These can be quickly unhooked for access to the radiator valve. NOTE: You may wish to line the wall behind the radiator with aluminum foil to deflect the radiator's heat out into the room. If you paint the frame and screen, use a non-flammable paint.

Source: Massachusetts Office for Children

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# Unsafe Art Supplies

AVOID powdered clay. It contains silica, which is easily inhaled and harmful to the lungs.

USE wet clay which can't be inhaled.

AVOID glazes that contain lead.

USE poster paints.

AVOID paints that require solvents such as turpentine to clean brushes.

USE water-based paints.

AVOID cold-water or commercial dyes that contain chemical additives.

USE natural dyes, such as vegetables, onion skins, etc.

AVOID permanent markers, which may contain toxic solvents.

USE water-base markers.

AVOID instant papier mache, which may contain lead or asbestos.

USE black-and-white newspaper and library paste or liquid starch.

AVOID epoxy, instant glues or other solvent-based glues.

USE water-based white glue or library paste.

AVOID powdered tempera paints.

USE liquid paint or any non-toxic paint.

For more information contact:

Art Hazards Information Center
5 Beekman Street
New York City, NY 10038

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Statewide Comprehensive Injury Prevention Program
Injury Prevention Resource Center
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Division of Family Health Services
150 Tremont Street
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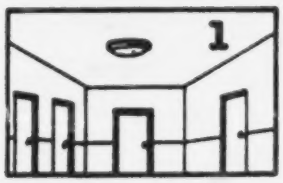
(617) 727-1246

# E. D. I. T. H.
**Exit Drills in the Home**

Should a fire occur, BE PREPARED. Practicing E.D.I.T.H. can save your life—and your family's. Remember—most deadly fires happen at night. PRACTICE AT NIGHT TO BE READY.

## Practice: (once a month)




Everyone in bedrooms with doors closed.

**2**
One person sounds alarm.

Each person tests his door for heat.

**4**
Pretend it's *cool.* **Use primary escape route.**

**OR**

Pretend it's *hot.* **Use alternate escape route.** (Alternate each month)

**5**
Everyone meets outdoors at an assigned spot.

**Remember:**
Always sleep with your bedroom door closed; it will help hold back deadly smoke.

## IN A REAL FIRE:

**If the smoke detector goes off, touch the door before opening it. IF IT IS HOT, USE AN ALTERNATE ESCAPE. If it is cool, brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. Be ready to slam it if SMOKE or HEAT rush in.**

Crawl low in smoke. The best air is close to the ground.

If your clothes catch fire, STOP, DROP and ROLL to put out the flames.

**GET OUT FAST.**
Don't waste time trying to
put out the fire
call the Fire Dept.
get dressed
or
gather valuables.
SECONDS COUNT!

Once out — *STAY OUT!* Don't go back inside for pets or belongings.

Call the fire department from a *neighbor's* phone.

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For more information, call your local health department.

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# MATCH SAFETY

*Where do you keep matches and lighters?*

Some children think matches and lighters are fun to play with.

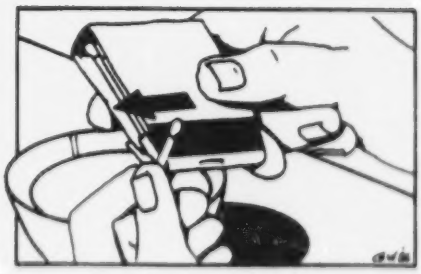
**Always keep matches and lighters out of reach and out of sight.**

## Teach your child that:

1. Matches and lighters are tools for grown-ups.
2. Children who play with matches can be badly burned, and can hurt other people too.
3. If he or she finds matches or a lighter, bring them to an adult *right away!*

## Using paper matches:

When your child is older than 5, TEACH him or her the safe way to light a match. You will be the best judge of when your child is ready to learn this skill.



1. remove match; close cover; turn pack over
2. strike in direction AWAY from the body
3. hold lighted match, away from body and clothing, for 2-3 seconds
4. have child blow out the match
5. hold match until cool, dip it in water, throw it away.

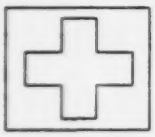
Repeat this once each day for a week. *Be sure that you are in a safe place while you teach*—not near furniture, curtains, or anything that could catch on fire!

If you think that your child has a fascination with lighting matches or starting fires, ask your doctor for advice or call the State Fire Marshal's Office for information about getting help.

Statewide Comprehensive Injury Prevention Program
Mass. Department of Public Health, Division of Family Health Services
150 Tremont Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 727-1246
For more information, call your local health department.

**SCIPP**

## First Aid Kit List



The following is a list of items which should be included in a basic home or preschool first aid kit:

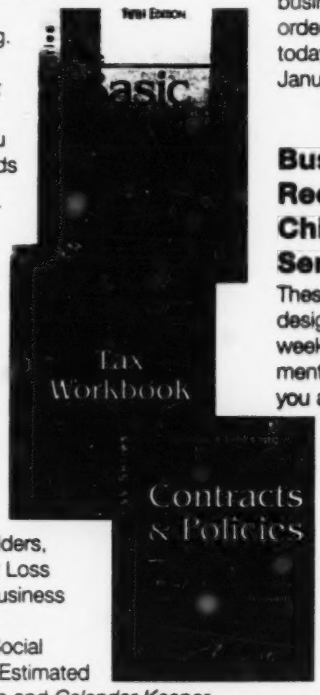
- First aid cards
- Adhesive strip bandages (1/2-inch, 3/4-inch, 1-inch strips)
- Gauze bandages (4" x 4", nonstick, sterile)
- Rolled flexible or stretch gauze
- Bandage tape (adhesive, micropore, or dermical)
- Nonstick, sterile pads (different sizes)
- Triangular bandages
- Small splints
- Eye dressing or pad
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Safety pins
- Thermometer
- Flashlight with fresh batteries
- Disposable latex gloves
- Three-ounce rubber bulb syringe (to rinse out eyes, wounds, etc.)
- Commercial cold pack or plastic bag for ice cubes
- Clean cloth
- Soap
- Small plastic cup
- Sealed packages of cleansing wipes
- Syrup of ipecac (1-ounce bottles)
- Special items for children with specific health problems (for example, bee sting kit or an inhaler for children with asthma)
- Emergency Telephone Guide
- Emergency contact information (phone numbers of the children's parents)
- Change for pay phone
- Pen or pencil, and note pad
- First aid chart

## The Basic Guide to Family Child Care Record Keeping FIFTH EDITION

Save even more money in taxes with this practical resource. Includes:

- Over 750 allowable deductions!
- How to record deductions on tax forms.
- How to set up a record-keeping system.
- Expanded instructions on how to calculate your Time-Space percentage and food expenses, how to choose and use a tax preparer, and how to handle an IRS audit.

*The Basic Guide* explains what business records to keep for taxes and how to keep them. Clear, jargon-free explanations will streamline your record keeping. Use with Redleaf's *Calendar-Keeper* and the *Tax Workbook* and be confident that you are claiming all the deductions you are entitled to—with the records to back it up!




## Family Child Care Tax Workbook

Save time and never make a mistake on your taxes with the *Tax Workbook!* This annual publication includes all the changes in tax laws for the year and step-by-step instructions for completing federal tax forms. It also covers the most-used forms of family child care providers, including Schedule C (Profit or Loss from Business), Form 8829 (Business Use of the Home), Form 4562 (Depreciation), Schedule SE (Social Security), and Form 1040 ES (Estimated Tax). Use with *The Basic Guide* and *Calendar-Keeper* for a complete record-keeping and tax system.

## Family Child Care Contracts and Policies SECOND EDITION

This revised and expanded edition of *Family Child Care Contracts and Policies* gives you the tools you need to establish and enforce contracts and policies, build trust between provider and parent, and demonstrate professionalism. Also includes examples of contracts and policies you can use as a reference for writing your own. Contracts and policies don't have to be tough, if you use this excellent guide!

## Family Child Care Starter Kit

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A comprehensive software program that can handle all of your record-keeping needs. It contains sections on Food Program management, detailed expense tracking, and dozens of reports and worksheets to help you organize your business.

## Calendar-Keeper

Get a head start on your business planning and order the *Calendar-Keeper* today. Don't wait until January.

## Business Receipts for Child Care Services

These receipts are designed specifically for family child care. Use them weekly for parents who want a receipt for every payment. Establish a record of year-to-date payments that you and the parent agree on. Lines for both provider and parent signatures are included. Three books per pack, 50 sets per book (total 150 sets).

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